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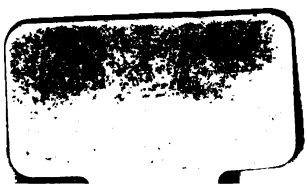

MIRVAN

A MOORISH TALE

&c.

MIRVAN

A MOORISH TALE

&c.

BY

AN AUTHOR WITHOUT A PUBLISHER.

Presentation Copy.

MDCCCLXIII.

280. c. 180.

[Entered at Stationers' Hall.]

THE special title-page of the present work will appear to call for explanation:—The writer is an author without a publisher. His work, though issued for criticism, is consequently not published; and this arises from causes which the whole literary public, just as much as himself, are, in his estimation, interested in putting down.

It appears that a new and hitherto unknown censorship exists over the British press. The so-called high-class publishers, whose whole fortunes and position are derived from literature, claim a right of judgment prior to, and more absolute than, that of the public—a right to condemn authors unheard, and exclude works which they have never read. Malicious criticism itself has never had power to do this. It never was able absolutely to exclude the public from judging for themselves; and that the mere mercenary trade of bookselling should claim and exercise such a prerogative, which in effect is worse and more injurious to authorship than the most unprincipled tyranny of abused criticism, must be novel to the British people.

Yet what are the facts? An author endeavours to get a fair hearing with the public, and for the purpose of obtaining this applies to a first-class publisher, not to take a share of risk in producing his work—for every man is entitled to decline risk—but merely to put into the usual channels of the trade, and on the usual terms of publishing profit, a volume, the whole expense of printing and advertising which, he offers to pay himself. He finds one by one this class of publishers return the volume uncut and unread, with an intimation that they "*never publish a work which does not issue from the press of their own printers.* That unless they have some guarantee that an author possesses so much merit as *the public* determine to call merit—unless, in short, the author has already achieved his literary success, they are altogether impervious to the question of profit, and feel their reputation as of higher value than any money consideration. They will be very glad, however, to hear from the author after he has achieved his reputation."

Now, possibly there is not much to find fault with in the appearance of all this. But the reality in its practice is a very different matter, both for the unknown author and the reading public. If authors were born with literary reputations, and had not to achieve them, this, their exclusion as unknown men, would be im-

possible. But all authors who have yet to achieve their name and fame in literature are excluded by this system from the sacred precincts of publishers of "reputation." For them there is no hearing in that quarter, says the publisher, and consequently none with the public.

If this system, which certainly cannot be called inquisitorial, for it investigates nothing, did not build up its very reputation on the assumption that it had the merit of judging and selecting any work of merit it professes to bring out, it would be of no great moment. But the inference to which the public are led, and by which they are deluded into believing in these publishers is, that they examine with due literary discrimination, judge with integrity, and exclude what, and only what, they find unfit or unworthy. It is upon this—upon the assumption of an integrity which they do not exercise, and a discrimination they do not possess, that their "*reputation*" is founded; that is, such "*reputation*" as they appear to have, after the more solid one which they take care to build upon the brains of talented and ill-rewarded authors, whose merit not they, but *the public*, determine to call merit—the high-class publishers, instead of that complimentary title, preferring to call it after all by the homely till-and-counter technicality—PROFIT —or at best SUCCESS, notwithstanding their noble disinterestedness

in esteeming their reputation of higher value than any money consideration.

The present writer had completed the printing of his leading tale, "Mirvan," the first half of his intended volume, when it bethought him that a publisher was one of the mechanical necessities of an author. Without this business convenience, it occurred to him that he had printed one-half too much, and he resolved to see whether the requisite remedy could be found before he proceeded further. He accordingly applied to one leading publisher, who had made a large fortune by similar works—then to another. These publishers, however, were too respectable to lend their reputation to any but authors who had a reputation without them. His print was returned in course of post unread—uncut; and, as a specimen of the principles of the élite in the publishing trade, the following commercial canon of the class :—

"44 DOVER STREET, LONDON, W.,
23d October 1862.

SIR—To avoid disappointment by any unnecessary delay in replying to your favour, we may at once inform you that we *never* publish any work which does not issue from the press of our own printers. Unless, too, we have some guarantee that an author possesses so much merit as *the public* determine to call merit,

and prove their estimate of excellence by exhausting one or more editions, we are altogether impervious to the question of profit; we feel that our reputation is of higher value than any money consideration. Should you again appear as an author, and wish to make a change of publisher, we shall be very glad to hear from you, bearing in mind that, should the manuscript be approved, the entire getting up must rest with us. We remain, &c.,

EDWARD MOXON & CO.

J. A. SMITH, Esq., Edinburgh."

Now, we have no quarrel in special with Messrs Moxon & Co., for we have taken care to ascertain, in their vindication that this rule is not *theirs* only, but that of their class; and we rather thank them for giving the only frank and straightforward avowal of it we have received, and thereby enabling us the more thoroughly to understand the matter. Some of the other publishers of their order, to whom we applied, were grand enough to put their foot upon Parnassus altogether, and enunciate on behalf of the publishing trade the solemn sentence: "There shall be Poetry no longer." For a trade which has netted no small share of profit from poetry in its time, and still continues to do so even from mere reprints, it occurred to us that this was somewhat like Sally, in one

of her airy humours, come up to the library to discharge Massa—and we took it in the spirit of meekness. But Messrs Moxon & Co. let us into the matter a little further, and made us to understand that Sally had a slender—we beg pardon—tender *reputation!* The high-class publishers confer reputation upon authors of reputation, by taking care always to publish on the successful side, by looking after the get-up—gilding the lily a little about the leaf edges—doing the tailoring part of the business tidily, in short, and taking only a small, not-to-be-mentioned, *feeler* off the printing!

If this be not the state of the matter, let Messrs Moxon and their class explain it. Dare they aver that such a system as they avow seeks out or encourages unknown and struggling merit? that, with a literary discrimination worthy of "reputation," worthy of the recognition *their reputation* has obtained from the public, they cater for only the highest taste and gratification in the most select regions of intellect? Is it not rather the truth, that notwithstanding this fine disdain for "money consideration," they are tardy disciples of the monetary Zoroaster after all, and worship, not the *rising*, but the *risen* sun?—achieved success being the only element of intellect they understand! No doubt the greedy prudence and trading selfishness of such principles have often, to the misfortune of mankind, a leasehold of this world as strong,

though not quite so valid, as virtue, magnanimity, or genius; but we have certainly yet to learn that this methodical canon for making sure of lucre, has a claim to assert "*reputation*" as its special mark in life, or that to its success must be conceded the right to dictate to progressing intellect, and to debar, in name of society, the avenues against advancing thought.

This notoriously selfish trade has benefited pretty well in its generations at the hands of authors and their admirers; but John Thomas does not, be it known among them, become one of nature's noblemen by merely hoarding his wages, and he must not become too dictatorial with his employers on the subject of reputation, because he has begun to assume, with some little confusion of thought, that he possesses the intellect he is allowed to traffic in.

On the other hand, criticism is not altogether without blame in this matter. So long as bilious journalism will vent its petulance by such expressions as: "Oh! there is Moxon hatching another blockhead!—confound Moxon!" critics create a *quasi* responsibility and reputation where neither really exists. For our own part, we say, in name and behalf of authorship, let criticism pour out its venom upon us at will, but spare our cobbler—it is not his fault that we go slipshod.

We may add that we care very little how these remarks or our

accompanying fragment may be received. We have now spent the best half of the life allowed to any author in comparative silence, rather than condescend to crouch where we had a right to walk. We have therefore suffered the bitterest part of any possible mortification on that subject already; and when we say that "Mirvan" was written twenty years ago, and better productions of our pen have been irrecoverably extinguished since, that fact will be as *apparent* to others as it is *real* to ourselves; so that it may be possible, perhaps, to believe that we are able, for the remainder of our earthly pilgrimage, to overcome the *cacoethes scribendi*, and sit down in oblivion with *time-taught* equanimity.

But for other authors who, if matters continue as they are, have all this yet to endure—for the public, who must in that case take the manufacture of mere publishing craft for future intellect—there are possibly others who will have a vigorous word or two to say after we may have expended in venom our valedictory address to literature. We doubt whether men of genuine mind will ever take kindly to such dictation, for the influence exercised by this undoubtedly powerful publishing class is, under its mildest name, a trade conspiracy against liberty of thought.

To it is to be attributed that undergrowth of literary rubbish, THE BOOK MANUFACTURE *of our times*, together with the tedious

inanition of thought—the interminable recastings—and the glut by which such traffic attempts to supply the place of true intellect, and succeeds in nauseating to utter surfeit the long-suffering of the reading public. The literary channels are choked with this publishing cobbler-work, while the genuine works of independent talent and genius have in consequence no clear and unencumbered avenue to full hearing and fair-play.

That such a system should have its hireling critics to favour its foistings upon public patience, and that the one set should decry the productions of the rival house and of all others, and hence the publisher become important enough to have a *reputation!* in connection with literature, is but a necessary consequence of its more or less complete business arrangements. Thus trading on the traditions of Grub Street and the venality of necessitous talent doubly degraded under their mercenary misdirection, the Day-book and Ledger are their only standard works of merit. As for *reputation!* their principles only invest the word with unutterable contempt. The time will and must come, when all this must be corrected—when the critic will be compelled to vouch for his integrity with his name, and when he and his organ will alike be rendered amenable for wilful misrepresentation. Indeed, there is no reason why this remedy should not be applied now, for it is scarcely

possible at common law that an author's works should be liable to slander and malicious falsification of their character, any more than a merchant's stock, without the author, as well as the merchant, having his suit for redress; and it only requires, we are convinced, a little more of self-defensive combination among authors to prove it.

MIRVAN

A MOORISH TALE

&c.

BY

J. A. SMITH.

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR.

Edinburgh:
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MIRVAN

A MOORISH TALE

CANTO I.

MIRVAN.

CANTO I.

I.

THE sky is delicately fair,
As Beauty's face in pensive thought;
And night, in that transparent air,
So soft, so calm, so lightly wrought,
Smiles through the dreamy canopy,
Far floating over earth and sea;
And lingers in each tender shade,

As Light herself, by sleep half-hid,
Had hung her robes upon the stars,
And, casting royalty aside,
Here wandered in disguise all pale,
To listen to the nightingale;
And catch—more rich than with the day—
The unconscious poet's liquid lay,
A glorying, plaintive, gushing bliss,
Tearful with very happiness—
But caught herself, too rapt to chide,
Heard, thrilled, his o'erflowed heart confess
The strain, in all its tenderness,
He to her queenly noon denied.

II.

Amid that scene which speaks of rest,
Of drowsy night in slumber hushed,
Of hope by happier visions blest
Than ere the waking sense surveyed,
Of gentle peace to spirit crushed,

And pallid cheek and aching head—
Why from yon casement streams the lamp,
Its star-like wakeful ray?
Are watchers there by fever's bed;
Would terror's thought the night evade;
Or does the mind, of holier stamp,
In secret silence pray?

But hark! a wandering zephyr nigh
Soft music's mingling tones convey;
Or is't a gently grieving sigh
Hath stolen joy's soft voice away?—
It comes again, and now more clear,
And words and thoughts are hovering near,
And night amid her silence caught,
Through all her dreamy reign is wrought
Suspensively to hear:

I.

And wilt thou come when all is peace?
And wilt thou keep thy vow to me,

And prize the tender hour of bliss
That joins our hearts in constancy?

II.

Still wilt thou find this bosom thine,
Though love to thee should prove its death;
Then be thine own the pledge to mine,
And time dissolve ere break our faith.

III.

Should other charms thy heart assail,
Should other eyes essay to win,
Should other tongues pour forth the tale,
To list to which thy vow makes sin—

IV.

Ah, heed not thou the newer face,
Let time her first impression prove,
And truth will add a holier grace,
And tell how dearer Zehra's love.

V.

Nor deem us changing passion's foil,
To be a fleeting hour carest,
Thou know'st not half the strength, the soul
That swells in constant woman's breast.

VI.

The drooping head and crimsoned cheek
May ruined virtue's anguish tell—
The broken heart more fit shall speak
How slighted Zehra loved too well.

III.

The strain hath ceased, and o'er her lute
A lady bends with pensive brow;
But though her passioned voice is mute,
Her inward thoughts tumultuous glow,
And fan with scarcely hidden sighs
The love-light of those dove-soft eyes.
Her neck the sculptor's marble shames,
Her soft sunned cheek the orient claims,

And keeps such beauty still a prize
'Mong passion-flowers and Paynim skies.
As musk-rose in dawn's ruby ray,
As dream that haunts the wakening day,
As virgin white rose with the blush
Of conscious purity appears,
Her inward love's impassioned gush
Warms the ripe peach her rich cheek wears,
And stirs a soul, by joy inspired—
With beauty's dream of passion fired.

IV.

On high her silver lamp is hung,
And o'er the roof and walls hath flung
On golden arabesques its light :—
Full on the maid the lustre shone
And o'er her airy form was thrown,
Sparkling amid her rich attire,
From gems that multiplied its fire,
A glow of brilliant spars ;

In that full glow, more softly bright,
She smiles, a rival queen of night
Chambered with clustering stars.

V.

While still her pensive head declined,
And o'er her face the feelings wrought
Which half had called her love unkind,
And half on hope rejoiced to dote,
A voice invades her watchful ear,
And stifled steps approaching near
Salute the silent ground.

"'Tis he!" She started from her seat,
And rushed impulsively to meet
The wished and welcome sound.
But scarce the casement had she gained,
With one glad bound to reach his breast,
Ere, full upon her view confest,
A warrior of her own dark creed,

With haughty brow and turbaned head,
Her heart's wild joy restrained.

VI.

"Ha, Jussuf, you !" The panting maid
With looks of dread the chief surveyed,
And would have fled, but that surprise
And fear at once had fixed her eyes,
And made her tremble to the heart.

"'Tis I," he said—and seized her hand,
And drew her shrinking form more near.

"Speak then, what would'st thou here demand ?
I like not that imperious air ;
And for thy prowling in the night,
It ill befits a warrior's soul."—
He laughed—"Fair maid, thine ire control,
'Tis now the hour when lovers roam,
And I am near my chosen home ;
Forbear thee, then, the censor's part

In pity to thy stranger knight,
For he has come a weary way,
Unblest by candid light of day.—
Ha! has he not yet come?
Or does he shrink concealed within,
And wisely teach his fears to shun
The sabre of a foe?"
His voice waxed harsher as he spoke;
His eye flashed fiercely forth its ire,
Which from some late carousal took
A more licentious glance of fire;
And sternly with his foot he smote
The ground; nor was his answer slow:
For instant at his side a slave,
Obsequious to his master's sway,
With ready hand, to mischief taught,
Stood eager to obey.

"Here, Cäab, bear this lady hence;
Yet, tell me, hast thou dug the grave?"

"'Tis ready." "Ha! thy recompense
Shall fitly match such faithful trust:
Bear hence this maid." Scarce had the chief
The prize resigned, ere—swift relief
And brief possession of his prey—
A blade with deadly vengeance fraught,
His menial levelled to the dust.—
One shudder quivered through his breast,
And—powerless all to keep their trust.—
His hands, relaxed as 'neath a spell,
He backward reeled, and lifeless fell.

VII.

Dark Jussuf started at the sound;
And more his soul was startled yet
To see the prize with all its charms,
On which his heart was madly set,
A captive in another's arms—
Her will without a struggle bound.

VIII.

Fierce as the bursting thunder's wrath,
His rapid arm and flashing blade
Deal forth their strokes; and in the death
The madness of his ire essayed,
He deigned not to avoid that maid,
But through her breast had struck the blow,
So eager levelled at his foe.

IX.

That foe recedes—'tis but a step—
To save a life prized o'er his own,
Which never yet had sought escape
Where daring most in danger shone:
His dark alboanozo[1] thrown
Around the maid, prepared he stood
Brave as the Moor, in equal mood
The strife of hatred to decide.
And fast and well their flashing steel
Contest the palm of hate and skill,

And make the gloomy eyes of night
To sparkle with impetuous light.

X.

As thunder-clouds together driven,
A deeper frown o'er darkness thrown,
And each with other's lightnings riven,
While silently the moon looks on—
So rushed those chiefs with gleaming steel,
So stood that maid in mute suspense,
Nor seemed her breast with life to swell,
So much her mind was more intense;
But while these foes still rise in strife,
As streams their winter torrents roll,
Within her eye enough of life
Is passing to exhaust the soul.

XI.

Ha! out upon the slippery ground,
Now dabbled with that menial's blood!

Her hero falls, and on his breast
The Moslem's knee's exulting prest.

The lady may no more survey,
With form transfixed, the direful feud—
Swift as the Moor his sabre raised,
Swift as his eye its triumph blazed,
His arm with frantic hands she bound.
"Fool! from the tiger tear his prey!"
He fiercely cried, as in the air
He reared and dashed away the fair—
But, in that instant, to his feet
As sudden sprung the prostrate knight,
And shewed the combat but begun,
And hate its vengeance yet to win.

XII.

But now more brief that second strife.
The Moor more reckless seems of life;
As if he sought in mutual death

At once to vent his bursting wrath.
Each blow is dealt with deadlier rage,
And clashes on the steel-clad breast.—
The mail their sabres cannot stay,
But piece by piece is hacked away.—
Few in such desperate feud engage
Who care to live, or hope to wrest
A trophy for the victor's crest.

XIII.

With foot to foot so close they stand,
Each arm feels fettered by its brand,
And its free range restrained; but who
Will yield the space for freer blow?
No!—closer still they fiercely press,
And more each baffled arm distress;
And round and round—there wound for wound
Contests each inch of beaten ground.
They grapple—close—but still no sign
Of vantage may the end define.

Now they throw off each iron grasp,
And stand an instant still, and gasp
Apart; and now again they pour
The flashing sabres' thickening shower.

The furious Moor must learn, at length,
To seek more hope in skill than strength.—
Forced for an instant to recede,
He seeks by wearying to defeat.
Now back the knight in turn is pressed,
And parries each fierce blow addressed;
But notes too late the wall behind,
'Gainst which impelled, he stands confined.

The Moor throws all in one dread stroke;
But, ah! too keenly overdealt—
That envious wall receives his shock—
His sabre's shivered to the hilt;
And, to the hilt, as swift the Knight
Has plunged his poignard in his side.

XIV.

Back falls the Moor, a senseless weight,
But with such burning eyes of hate,
As if his soul, mad with despair,
Sought in that basilisk-like glare
To spend itself in vengeance. yet,
Struck from the tempest of his heart,
It burst at once in one fierce dart
Of lightning to his struggling hate.

XV.

But little recks that victor now
For flaming eye or scowling brow.—
As fair a brow, as soft an eye
As ere the sunniest smiles had lit,
Reward the hard-won victory;
And, like the sunbeam on the cloud,
Smile o'er its tempest's darkening fit;
While tenderest accents thank aloud,

And fonder thanks in blushes glow,
Such as love only can bestow,
And true devotion prize—to read
The untold thoughts of that fair face,
And eye that quivers 'neath his gaze,
O'erpays his utmost deed.

XVI.

"Ah! Zehra, thou wilt think me changed;
And so I am, but not to thee.—
By fate or death alone estranged,
Falsehood may never make me free.—
Afar, upon life's desert cast,
With scarce a blossom on the waste
To warm the sympathetic breast,
Or charm its nobler powers.
Thy love—the Desert's Diamond[2] there,
A flower-hid fountain gushing fair—
Kept the savannah of my soul.
Gemmed with love-light—a dew-filled flower!

As talisman from Aden's bower,
Thou couldst my darkest mood control,
And in thy beauty flourishing,
To me wert Aden's wakening spring,
That joy from whence our race hath strayed;
And unto thee my heart still turned,
When faint or wearily it mourned,
To sigh for life and fresh'ning shade;
For never yet in dungeon dark
Did one pure sunbeam's lonely spark
Gladden the eyelids of despair,
As dreams of thee—thou radiant fair!"

XVII.

"And thou!" she answered, "what hast thou,
My long-lost Mirvan, been to me?
That cedar on the mountain's brow,
To which this fond and fluttering heart,
Like some poor timid, peaceful bird,
Hath clung and sought to build its nest,

Thus happy in thy sheltering breast,
In loved security.—
But say, what thought disturbs my brave ?"

"Ha !—'tis a signal from my slave
Of danger—I must say farewell,
This hour hath still its tales to tell ;
Yet fear not—here I leave my heart,
Whence vain were aught but death to part
Its clinging tendrils for new life.—
That sound again !—I must be brief—
Oh, tear-dewed joy !—Farewell !—farewell !"

CANTO II.

CANTO II.

I.

UPON Alhamar's[1] towers the sun
In full Grenadian glory shone,
And high within his Judgment-gate,[2]
The Moorish King, in public state
August, sat on his throne.

Around, oppressor and oppressed
To his impartial ear addressed
The suppliant voice, and justice craved;
Or, armed in guile, detection braved;
And, as their arts the council sway,
Turned murmuring, or with mirth away.

II.

Beside the king, with silver beard,
The noble Abenaman stands—
One, oft the monarch's foes had feared;
But, now for wisdom more revered,
His withered arms and palsied hands,
No more presume to wield the sword,
For he has donned the garb of peace;
Yet still supporting age with grace,
His head more nobly seems to tower,
Like some maturer form of power,
With counsel to his lord.

III.

But see! what group is gathering near?—
What sudden tumult stirs the throng?—
What murmur thrills on every tongue?—
"Give way! give way!—a passage clear—
'Tis Aldoradin with a bier:
Some death most foully done."

They open rank, and forth is borne,
By pensive slaves, a gory form,
In Lybian mantle hid;
And following these, a haughty Moor,
Whose brows in gloomy darkness lower,
And give, in eyes that slowly roll,
Fit index of a darker soul,
To herald such a deed.

IV.

"Why comest thou here?" the king demands,
As at his feet the form is laid;
"And wherefore bring'st with gory hands,
A load, we fear, the grave should hide?"
"I come," the haughty Moor replied,
"At this avenging porch, to crave
The doom of those who strike the brave
By treason in the night;
Who lure their unsuspecting prey

With friendly voice; then basely slay,
And dig the midnight grave."

V.

"Now, Allah, aid us with thy light!"
The king exclaimed with troubled brow,
"Nor leave us darkly in our might
To strike the just with erring blow:
Speak, Abenaman, ever wise,
For thou, of late, hast conned our laws;
When blood for retribution cries
Against the guilty hand,
How should that king reward the sin
Whose throne enduring would within
The gate of judgment stand?"

VI.

"Our laws," the noble sage replied,
"With blood for blood the doom decide
Of those who take man's life away
By cherished hate or treachery:

These proved—thy hand alone may shade
From vengeance the devoted head."

VII.

"Now, by yon holy Hand and Key,[8]
Which give this porch its sanctity!—
Thine be the doom, as thine the deed,"
The gloomy Aldoradin cried.
"Behold the victim of thy hate—
Our bravest Moor—untimely dead.
With thee he last was seen alive,
With thee a guest but yester-eve—
Within thy garden found to-day,
All weltering in his blood he lay;
And by his side a faithful slave,
And in thy ground a ready grave;
With lamp to aid thee in the dark,
And spade to hide thy midnight work:
'Gainst thee I here accuser stand,
From thee a brother's blood demand."

VIII.

"I?—wretched slave!—more like the deed
Than worthy here to raise thy head—
I play the butcher to my guest,
And slay him in the friendly feast?
Or ask a grave to hide my deed!"
The indignant sage amazed replied:

"I've marked thine enmity of old,
Though fear hath kept its purpose cold.
Have I for this, thou recreant slave,
Still chiefest ranked among the brave?
Still in the battle foremost led,
While thou and thine ignobly fled?
Methinks the discipline were strange
Through which I've passed to such a change:
I veil the rage my thoughts dictate?
And like a coward mask my hate?—
Such arts are thine, foul fratricide:
I act no deeds for shame to hide."

IX.

"Out on thy beard and hoary age!"
'Doradin cried, too truly bold;
"That dar'st the foulest deeds essay—
Thy trusting guest and friend betray,
And brave, too, Heaven's avenging rage,
Even while thy grounds blush at the day
Stained with thy murders; wilt deny
The crime thy whispering slaves unfold?—
Say, caitiff, did not yester-eve,
That noble chief, now lifeless laid,
Demand thy mistress for his bride,
And had his suit, with haughty port,
Denied by thy disdainful lord?—
Or say, proud chief, is this thy slave?"

X.

Forth stept, as Aldoradin spoke,
A crouching Lybian, swart as night,

But Abenaman, as the rock
That braves unmoved the tempest's might,
Smiled at the sight, and waved his hand :—
"I grant thee, chief, that I denied
My daughter for thy kinsman's bride ;
But tell me, if thy tale be true,
That I in midnight murder drew,
Whence comes on yonder gory sight,
Signs of premeditated fight—
This splintered mail—that broken brand ?"

XI.

"Ay, speak of these," the king exclaims—
"Say, Aldoradin, whence are these ?
Do Moors with swords woo sires for dames ?
Is mail the Moorish garb of peace ?" [4]

XII.

"Can I, dread sire, these things divine ;
Or is their proper charge with me ?

The guile which friendship could entwine
With midnight deed of treachery
Might own, methinks, so much address
As compass trifling mask like this
To aid more deep deceit.
Or surely he whose faithless word
Is still in counsel most revered,
While well disguised he keeps at heart,
Against his lord, the Christian's part,
Might own a meaner cheat."

XIII.

"The Christian's part! 'Doradin, shame!
Does malice so usurp thy soul,
That thou wilt taint a noble name,
And sway our mind by means so foul?"

"Sire, if I err, ask of this slave
For whom his daughter is reserved;
And why our Moors are slighted, save
To give a Christian knight reward."

XIV.

"Prophet of Alla, can it be?"
The king in sudden ire exclaimed:
"Speak, dog! Ha! dost confirm the tale?
I fear thy master is defamed.
If thou'st conspired against thy lord,
Shudder, vile wretch, at our decree.

Ah! Abenaman, thou art pale.
Nay, if thy daughter's heart hath strayed
To warrior of a different creed,—
And if thine own may have been swayed,
Unconscious too, I know the meed
Of loyalty was ever thine;
And yet, ere part with thy regard,
We will forget—restore—reward:
Nay, as we look with hope to Heaven,
Thou hast but to confess thy crime,
That we may yet redeem the time:
Then kneel, and be forgiven."

XV.

"Sire, think not this obeisance made
To rescue a dishonoured head—
The act of contrite shame:
I know no crime that ought to kneel;
Moved only by the truth I feel,
I bend a loyal knee.
Long have I held an honoured name;
Too long, I fear me, lived; for fame
Seems weary of the tower it raised,
Or envious of the worth it praised;
Decay at last hath made a wreck
The open tempest could not shake;
And now, when winter gathers o'er,
The fierce malignant lightnings pour,
And blast the withered tree.
Oh God! restore that youth which gave
These feeble palsied arms their power;
Once, few among our Moorish brave
Scorned Abenaman's angry hour!"

An instant, with majestic mood,
The aged hero towering stood;
With hands stretched forth, invoked the skies,
While nobly beamed his kindling eyes:—
'T was vain, the secret blight of time
Had treason wrought in every limb;
Strained with the task, there slowly came
A dulness o'er his languid frame
That trembled 'neath his ire;
His hands all feebly sought his side,
His eyes dimmed 'neath the quivering lid,
And tears put out their fire.
He felt the shame he could not hide—
For shame he deemed that woman's tide,
And, while his heart swelled in his breast,
And sobbed with agony oppressed,
He turned, unconscious, to his sire,
And on his shoulder wept.

The monarch's eyelids overflowed—

And few their manhood better kept—
To see the hero so subdued.
But Aldoradin darkly frowned,
And, dipping in his brother's wound
A scarf, stretched to the king the stain :—
"Since feeble tears from treason's eye
May thy soft-hearted mercy buy ;
Since tears may bloodiest deeds atone,
And frighten justice from thy throne ;
Since tears move more than subjects slain,"
Said Aldoradin sneeringly,
"What is the price of blood ?
Think not, weak king, that thou wilt save
This traitor from a murderer's grave."

XVI.

"Peace ! haughty chief," the king replied,
"Nor draw our fury on thy head.
Would thy fierce vengeance climb our throne,
And wield its sceptre as thine own ?—

If, rebel! we decree to save,
Dar'st thou our royal purpose brave?
Or is our power a mockery here,
And shall the king the subject fear?"

XVII.

"Then be this blood upon thy head!"
The gloomy chief impetuous cried:—
"Thine be the crime thou hast espoused,
And thine the doom thou hast refused.
Thy blood the bloody deed atone;
And may this chief, untimely gone,
From heaven the vengeance quickly bring;
Here I denounce thee, on thy throne,
To justice false—a perjured king!"

XVIII.

"A perjured king!" 'Benaman cried,
And started into sudden life:
"What traitor tongue so boldly lied?
Ha, Aldoradin!—shameless chief!

Dost thus forget thy subject vow?
Base slave, a sword once graced this side
Skilled in the chastisement of pride;
Ah!—well for thee—'tis absent now."

XIX.

"Old dotard, peace!—nor idly rave
Between my mercy and thy grave;
Let prudence study from thy fears,
Nor thus with others feuds entwine.
Or arm thine eyes again with tears,
For heavy reckoning still is thine
In undivided load.
Turn, then, to heaven while life still wanes—
Ask if yet thither there remains,
For Murder's foot, a road?"

XX.

"Speak to thine own base soul of fears!
Be guilt like thine alarmed to die,

Or to approach a patriarch's years,"
Was Abenaman's fierce reply.
" I have not so misused mine age
To tremble in life's wreck ;
But scorn the clamour of thy rage,
And frown thy fury back.
Let Lists[5] be framed, and, if thou darest
Approve thy words by manly deed,
Prepare thine arms, and, as thou bearest
Thyself, may morn thy cause decide ;
I—leaving Heaven to shew the right,
Will this time-shaken form oppose,
Which shrinks not yet to meet the fight
I 've waged ere now 'gainst worthier foes :—
Nay, sire—nor interdict the strife :
'Tis true that age will weakness bring ;
Yet how may I this wreck of life
More nobly spend, than for my king !
Nor want I yet a soul of flame,
That might endow a younger frame

Than these gray hairs would indicate,
To play again the hero's part.
E'en now my spirit is elate;
My veins with wonted vigour swell;
I cast away mine age, and feel
The young blood gushing in my heart;
Great wrong will make the weak feel strong,
And why not make an old man young?"

XXI.

And as he spoke, stirred in his soul,
A mighty impulse seemed to roll:
His frame is swelled with sudden power—
His fierce eyes flash—his eyebrows lower;
Firm and erect he rears his head,
As with the fire of youth elate:
His limbs, athletic, court the strife—
Their muscles full with bursting life.

The crowd transfixed, with aspect strange,
And hushed before the sudden change,

Gaze on that form, which greets their eye,
Like some Herculean phantasy;
As if they thought it false to sense—
A wild night-vision's airy trance:
And less had wondered then than now
To see it thus with vigour glow.
But, fixed as statue, still he stands,
The firm impress of truth,
Till, doubt—confused before its power,
Slow lending credence to the hour—
They deem the age that lately lay
Upon those nerves like apathy
A pause amid their youth.

With mutual thought each hand is raised—
Still no relaxing nerve gives way;
All unrestrained their shouts resound,
And one wide sea of turbans waved;
While clamorously—"The Lists!" they cry—
"Our long-lost hero's found!"

XXII.

And Aldoradin wondered, too,
As burst that change upon his view;
And felt his shrinking heart grow chill—
His tongue turn recreant to his will;
Despite his youth, his courage fail—
Despite his pride, his cold gaze quail
Beneath that old man's eye.
Well did he know that spirit's ire
Had not belied its former might;
But scarce he deemed its waning fire
E'en time itself could not benight,
But, dashing frailty thus away,
Could, 'mid her palsies, so inspire
Age with its energy.

XXIII.

As—half in wonder, half in grief—
The king consented to the strife,

With strong misgiving mind,
And slowly spoke, 'Doradin clung
To the reluctance of his tongue,
As with a grasp at hope.
But firm, though slow, the judgment fell,
Which to Ben Zurrah's[6] care and will
The combatants consigned;
And, as the king the judgment spoke,
The crowds dispersed, the council broke,
To wait the morrow's skill.

CANTO III.

CANTO III.

I.

THE morning dawns with soft gray eye
Along the light-tinged eastern sky—
As Beauty's glance, in slumber hid,
Wakes dimly 'neath the rising lid—
And forth upon the world its light
Smiles 'neath the rising veil of night,
Slow brightening into day.
The stars hang back in heaven before
That glance of glory gladdening o'er;
And as the sun's first golden ray
Pierces the mountain's mantle gray,
Forth stand the Vega's[1] laughing bowers—

A cluster of unfolding flowers
That shame night-dreams away.

II.

Amid that scene the lists are set,
And eager crowds are gathered round,
Where failing age and childhood, met
To see the chief, of old renowned,
Impatient wait the coming king,
The early looked-for hour to bring.

III.

At length he came, and reached the throne,
With many a loyal welcome hailed ;
But sad he sat, and all alone,
And with his hand his eyes he veiled—
Some said to hide a tear.
Howe'er, his queen remained behind,
And to the monarch's thought inclined,—
It were no feud for dames to charm,

Where age must raise its withered arm
To guard its own gray hair.

IV.

At last the monarch waved his hand—
The heralds sounded and proclaimed;
And Aldoradin, by command,
Rehearsed his charge—the combat claimed—
And gave his cause to fate.
But scarce the blast had died away,
Ere, as impatient of delay,
The stern defiance backward thrown,
With louder and more angry tone,
Rung from the Dervise[2] gate.

The monarch turned to see the chief,
With wonder-wavering belief;
But forth he rode, as stern in might—
As firm in bearing, to the sight,
As he some common feat essayed.

V.

His visor Aldoradin closed—
'Twas well—to hide that quivering lip;
But vain the act—his grasp refused
The charge his visor sought to keep—
He could not hide that lance's point,
Which, like a pine-tree 'neath the wind,
Shook in his aspen hand.

VI.

The charge denied, the warriors stood
Confronted sternly for the feud;
And—instant as the trumpet's sound,
Gave fury rein, each charger's form
Burst forth as with a sudden storm,
And darted to the shock.
But brief the issue: scarce they met,
Ere Aldoradin and his steed,
Hurled downward like a riven rock,

Beneath the o'er-riding victor's tread,
Lay wounded on the ground ;
And wild and wildered was his look,
As o'er him, with unruffled crest,
And sword-point glancing at his throat,
His foe, with foot upon his breast,
Proud and victorious stood :—
But swift the king a sign gave out,
Which bade the victor stay his hand,
And spare the vanquished's blood.

"Well might he, to thine ire resigned,
Lie sacrificed upon thy brand ;
But yet, let us his life demand,"
The king, approaching, said :
"For he hath served us well of yore,
When, stript of birthright and of power,
We by a fratricide had bled ;
And we would pay that faith in him,
Which saved us from a brother's crime."

VII.

"His brother's crime—ay, 'twas our plot,"
Bewildered, Aldoradin cries;
"O long I thought the deed forgot!
We stabbed, and threw him in the moat.
'Twas night for ever to his eyes;
For with the morning's early ray,
The wolf had made a toilless prey.—
Such Mirvan's fate
Beneath our hate;
For he had crossed us in life's prize,
And death alone might then assuage
Mine and my brother's secret rage.

"Upon an evil hour he came,
When we had stirred rebellion's flame,
And, banded with our dark allies,
Had met the palace to surprise.—
A prey brought ready to our hand,
He met us and our secret band,

And warned the warders with his cry—
His last, ere Jussuf's vengeful steel,
Driven to the hilt with hatred's skill,
Bade him in silence darkly die.—
But reach me water ere I sink
O'er frowning horror's hastening brink.—
For aiding that fierce brother's blow,
This wound drains deadly vengeance now.

" The guards alarmed, we forged a tale
To screen those who could not escape,
And give our crime another shape.
A hundred vowed *he* came to kill
The monarch, and the throne obtain.
That we—too late his plot to know—
Could only strike the instant blow;
And thus he was surprised and slain.

Those who escaped of that dark band,
Bore with them all our treason's brand,

As his accomplices in ill ;
And found upon another shore
Safe refuge from the monarch's power.—
The king believed we served his cause,
And blindly nursed his brother's foes."

VIII.

Dumb at these words, the monarch stood
As if each accent froze his blood,
And choked its fountain up ;
Till, furious, all his passions burst
At once, as fierce he cried, " Accursed !
Is this the wretch I sought to save ?
And interposed to shield from death
Deserved ; while all a brother's faith
Appealed in vain to hope.—
Oh, I was blind, and well deserved
The blunder that I made !
The tie of blood that tore my heart,

Our boyhood's love, his youth—all pled
For other than thy treason said;
Yet with the adder's ear I heard,
And trusted what thy art had framed—
But die"——

"Nay! now 'tis mine," exclaimed
The victor, "mercy to demand;"
And soft he stayed the monarch's hand,
While kneeling down, his casque he raised.

"Mirvan!"—Surprised the monarch gazed.—
"For this," he cried, "be Alla blest!"—
And sunk on his lost brother's breast.

IX.

But starting up in frantic haste,
With horror raving and aghast—
"'Tis he! 'tis he!" 'Doradin cried;
"Oh save me, hide me from my deed;

For ever since that murderous hour,
I've thus been haunted by its power,
And oft so seen it in the field,
Where dying heroes round it reeled,
'Mong fronting ranks of other foes,
Seek me in battle's rush to cross—
And stem the triumph of our side—
And through our banded veterans ride;
Or scorn a present victory,
And only aim its blows at me."

Then, with a shudder of despair,
'Doradin, in his terror mad,
With bursting eyes and rising hair,
Fell on his face, convulsed and dead.

X.

While still the royal brothers stood,
Appalled before the ghastly sight,

A sudden bugle sounded loud,
And spurring on his panting steed,
A warrior burst into the course.

"How now, Ben Zurrah?" asked the king,
As wonderingly he reined his horse;
"What eager tidings dost thou bring."

"I come, dread sire—too late, I find,
To prove the purpose that I bore;
I came as Abenaman's friend,
His spotless honour to defend,
And wring from yonder lifeless heart,
A word might make him just amend,
And let his soul in peace depart;
But some good arm hath been before."

XI.

"His soul depart! What hast thou said,
Ben Cerrage?" Mirvan anxious cried.

"Brave prince, I grieve the joy to mar.
My heart in secret long desired"—
Sad Abencerrage slow replied:—
"To see thee stand victorious here,
O'er those who 'gainst thy truth conspired;
But Abenaman on the brink
Of being, weak and trembling lies,
Clinging by one last parting link,
With death's dark mist before his eyes.—
Strained by the workings of his soul
In an exhausted frame,
And burning 'neath the slander foul
Imputed to his name,
His fevered nature faints away.

"Vain, Zehra with unwearied care
Hangs o'er his death-bed in despair;
The tyrant closely grasps his prey.—
The dying hero to the king
Consigns his child in sacred trust.

But come, ere yet his soul take wing,
And silence hush that noble breast;
For he hath from his daughter's tongue,
Just heard the story of thy wrong,
And, smiling from the arms of death,
Would bless thee with his parting breath."

NOTES

TO

MIRVAN.

NOTES TO CANTO I.

Note 1.

"ALBOANOZO."

The name given by the Moors to an African mantle, worn by them in winter; and from which, probably, originated the Spanish cloak of modern times.

Note 2.

"DESERT'S DIAMOND."

The green Islands or Savannahs in the Arabian Desert, so much welcomed by the caravans on a journey over the burning sand, and which are always indebted, for the preservation of their verdure and beauty, to the presence of a limpid and delicious spring,

welling up and watering the ground around it, are poetically and lovingly called by the Arabs, "the Diamonds of the Desert." They are frequently shaded by a grove of graceful palm-trees, and surrounded and overhung by flowers and fresh and beautiful herbage.

NOTES TO CANTO II.

Note 1.

"ALHAMAR'S TOWERS."

The city of Granada, and fortress and palace of Alhambra, sometimes so called from Alhamar (Ibnu-l-ahmar, era 1248), their founder. After Cordova, the holy city of the Moors, and western rival of Mecca, had fallen, Bourke, in his history, informs us that, when Ferdinand III. of Castile directed his arms against the Moors on the side of Andalusia—about the time that another heroic king of the Spaniards, James I. of Arragon, projected the reduction of Valencia—Ferdinand made many valuable acquisitions, among which was the original Alhambra, which he found forsaken on his approach—the affrighted inhabitants betaking themselves to Granada, where they founded a new city, which they named after

the one they had forsaken; and, mentioning that the tribe of Alhamar was originally from Caffa, on the borders of the Red Sea, proceeds to say that Alhamar—reported by birth to have been but a simple shepherd—having been accidentally present at a battle, became ever after impatient of the dull uniformity of pastoral life, and was tempted to exchange the crook for the falchion, to which he owed his elevation to the throne. Incidents like this are not uncommon in history, and an immediate parallel is that of David, king of Israel; but they frequently occurred among the Moors.

It is of little consequence, says the historian, to what source true greatness traces its origin, "to whom related, or by whom begot." Alhamar was assisted in his pretensions to the crown by a powerful auxiliary, who opportunely appeared, in aid of his merits. This was a kind of prophetic priest called a *Santon*, who most seasonably foretold that he was to be a king, and whose prediction, like many others, led to its own verification.

The new king, who was not inferior in talents to Benhoud,* justly regarded himself as the last prop of the Mussulman establishments in Spain; and the persecutions to which his country-

* The last Moorish king or caliph of Cordova—a great prince, murdered by one of his own lieutenants, about this time, at a most unfortunate juncture for his country.

men had been exposed, and the dangers which seemed daily to be threatening more immediately his own states, determined him to found a city which might in some degree replace Cordova, and present a solid barrier to the impetuosity of the Christian encroachments. He accordingly founded the city of Granada.

This city is built upon two declivities, at the foot of the Sierra Nevada, or Snowy Mountain, having the benefit of two rivers, one of which intersects, and the other surrounds it. On the summit of these declivities Alhamar had erected two fortresses, one called Albazin, the other Alhambra, in honour of the inhabitants of the old Alhambra, who, as already stated, had betaken themselves thither after the loss of their proper city. Granada soon became a considerable city of itself, the original settlers having been recruited by fresh accessions of the Moors, whom Ferdinand expelled from Baëza, and of such as had forsaken Valencia, Cordova, and the other reduced places. Being thus suddenly augmented by the adventitious acquisition of such an immense population, Granada may be said to have burst forth into a state of complete maturity from its very birth. The city was upwards of three leagues in length, and its ramparts were flanked by no less than 1030 towers.

Mahomed Al Hamar, as this prince was also called, was a true

patriot-king; and, aware of the danger to which subdivision exposed them, tried various experiments to unite all the Mussulmen in Spain under one sceptre. But the little province of Murcia, that of Algarvez, governed by its native princes, and above all, the great republic of Seville, refused his proffered policy. Each of these states was intent upon defending its independence, and yet refused to unite with the only power that was really able to secure it—an infatuation which enabled the Spaniards to attack them separately, and crush the whole of them in succession. For want of this unity, Alhamar, though he gained many advantages at the commencement of his reign, was unable to turn them to any important account, and was at last forced by Ferdinand of Castile to submit to a humiliating peace, under which he was compelled to do homage, and pay tribute for his crown; and, subsequently, to aid his enemy in the reduction of the Moorish republic of Seville. This treaty was faithfully observed by Alhamar during the life of Ferdinand; but the latter having unwisely expelled the inhabitants from Seville, after his conquest of that city, Alhamar, with great prudence and judgment, gave them refuge in Granada, thereby further augmenting his population to the amount of a hundred thousand; and applied the interval of tranquillity to the consoli-

dation of his power. He was, under difficult circumstances, a prince of the highest ability and discretion.

Note 2.

"JUDGMENT-GATE."

The entrance to the Alhambra is by this gate, and here the Moorish kings of Granada sat and administered justice in the oriental fashion (Deut. xvi. 18; 1 Kings, vii. 7). The Moorish name for this Gate of Judgment was Babu-sh-shari'ah, or the Gate of the Law. It was built in 1308, by Yusuf or Jussuf (Joseph) I., otherwise called Abú-l-hajáj, who added many rich and elaborate decorations to the Alhambra. Over the inner doorway an inscription records its erection, and the name of its founder, and concludes with an invocation on itself in the following terms: "May Alla make *this* a protecting bulwark, and record its erection among the imperishable actions of the just!"

Note 3.

"NOW, BY YON HOLY HAND AND KEY,
WHICH GIVE THIS PORCH ITS SANCTITY."

Over the outer horse-shoe arch of the Gate of Judgment is seen an open hand, which is considered by some, "an emblem of

hospitality and generosity, the redeeming qualities of the Oriental." Others think it a type of the five principal commandments of the creed of Islam: "To keep the fast of Ramadan, pilgrimage to Mecca, almsgiving, ablution, and war against the infidel." Others refer it to the Hebrew *Jadh*, the hand of God, the oriental symbol of power and providence. "But the true meaning of it," says Ford, in his *Hand-Book for Travellers in Spain*, published by Murray, "is a talisman over the portal, against the much-dreaded 'Evil Eye,' at which Orientals and Spaniards have always, and do still, tremble. The Morisco women wore small hands of gold or silver round their necks, like the Neapolitans, and a substitute for the classical phallic symbol of defiance. Charles V., by a Pragmatica in 1525, forbade this usage. In the *Sala de los Embajadores* is an inscription to that purport: 'The best praise be given to God! *I will remove all the effects of an evil eye upon our master Yusúf,*'" &c.

Bourke, however, in his history, with, I think, much more probability, ascribes all three significations to the *hand;* holding its first signification to be the hand of Providence; its second, a prototype or abridgment of the law; and its third, the wholly superstitious one just referred to.

Over the inner arch is a sculptured key, which Bourke says had,

among the Mussulmen, pretty much the same emblematic or symbolical meaning as the cross with Christians, the great badge of their faith. It had the same power over the gates of heaven, as the key of St Peter. Thus we find in the Alcoran: "Is not God equally compassionate towards those who write of Him, and those who believe in Him? Does He not give His legate the power of heaven, which is on high, and the fire which is beneath? Does He not give him *the key*, together with the office and title *of porter*, that he may open the gates of the heavenly mansion to the elect?" The key was also the blazon, or coat of arms, of the Andalusian Moors, and was borne upon their banners when they invaded Spain.

In the key, according to other authorities, may be seen the oriental symbol of power, or the key of David (Isaiah, xxii. 22; Rev. iii. 7). It is also said to be simply a badge of honour, like the keys borne by gentlemen of the bedchamber, &c. The key was a symbolic sign among the Súfis, denoting knowledge: "The key by which God opens the hearts of believers."

"There is," says Ford, "an idle tale, how the Moors boasted that this gate would never be opened to the Christians until the *hand* took the *key*." But may not, after all, this "idle tale" mean a good deal more than the narrator has had the wit to

perceive? If, as Bourke maintains, the hand was held by the Mussulmen to mean the *hand of Providence*, we can see a fine figurative reason, and one of which Moorish rhetoric was highly capable, why the gate would not be opened to the Christians till *that hand* used the key, and also why the Moors relied upon it as a charm against the "evil eye" and all other evils.

The entrance is carried through a *double* gate, indicating strict conformity with the oriental structure and custom in administering justice; *e. g.* David sat between the *two* gates (2 Sam. xviii. 24).

Note 4.

"Do Moors with swords woo sires for dames?—
Is mail the Moorish garb of peace?"

A Moorish king might well make such an inquiry. Vastly in advance of the civilization of Christendom at this period, the Moorish manners and customs were full of enlightening example. Their peace was not an armed armistice, a mere sheathing of weapons, or suppression of passions ever ready for war; and which could not walk the street, or enter a lady's boudoir, or even a ball-room, without those side-arms, from the ever-ready resort to which so much bloodshed resulted, that scarcely a man of that age died

without the stain of murder on his conscience. Peace among the Moors was a thoroughly earnest entrance into the gentleness and refining pursuits of industrious civilization. Their chivalrous and courteous gallantry realized, to the fullest extent, the lion in war, and the lamb in peace. In this the Moors of Granada were eminently distinguished: "Much of their chivalrous manners," says Bourke, "is, no doubt, to be attributed to their women, who were exactly qualified to create and keep alive this spirit of gallantry among their countrymen, and to occasion those excesses of love, of which so many examples, equally extraordinary as pleasing, occur both in Spanish and Arabian history. They were then, what they continue to this day, the most alluring and fascinating women in the world. As my authority for this assertion, the following portrait of them is taken from an Arabian history, published at Granada in the reign of Mahomet the Old: 'They are,' says this historian, 'uncommonly beautiful, and their charms, which rarely fail to impress at first sight, are further set off by a lightness and grace which gives them an influence quite irresistible. They are rather below the middle stature; their hair, which is of a beautiful black, descends almost to their ancles. No vermilion can vie with their lips, which are continually sending forth the most bewitching smiles, as if expressly to display teeth

as white as alabaster. They are profuse in the use of perfumes and washes, which, being exquisite in their kinds, give a freshness and lustre to the skin rarely to be equalled by the women of other countries. Their steps, their dances, all their movements, display a graceful softness, an easy negligence that enhances their other charms, and not only renders them irresistible, but exalts them beyond all power of praise. Their conversation is lively and poignant; their wit refined and penetrating, equally adapted to grave and abstruse discussions, as to the pleasantest and most lively sallies.'" This Platonic Moor seems to have bewitched Mr Bourke, for he adds:

"Illam quicquid agit, quoquo vestigia flectit
Componit furtim subsequiturque decor."

Some grace propitious on her step attends,
Adjusts her charms by stealth, and recommends.

And in a special note:

"In all she says, in all she does,
So many charms Alxa shews,
We can't admire too highly;
But where's the wonder she excels?
The lovely wanton works by spells;
The graces aid her slyly."

No doubt, the society of woman, duly appreciated, is one of the most refining influences of life; but the Moors of both sexes possessed many inherent elements of a great race. Their reverence of God, of truth, and of justice, was profound, and, within the limits of their experience and knowledge, remarkably acute; and indeed, referring to the most common ethnographic tabulation of the human family, we cannot doubt that the mingled descendants of Arphaxad, Aram, and Mizraim, who had left on the highway of the world's history, such achievements as Assyria, Damascus, the Libyan Thebes, Tyre, Sidon, Palmyra, Edom, and Carthage, were invested with traditionary grandeur fitted to sustain the loftiest human aspirations; and that noble hearts like theirs were born of many more motives to magnificence than the one glorious and imperishable influence of external beauty. Out of many remarkable anecdotes with which Moorish history abounds, two will sufficiently serve to testify this. The first is one of Abbou Abbas Al Hakham, son of the Caliph Abdelzamin III. of Cordova, and which, though probably familiar enough to many of our readers, cannot be too often repeated, as a noble instance of integrity and wisdom. A poor woman of the city of Zehra owned a small field contiguous to this caliph's garden, upon which the prince wished to erect a pavilion, and the intendant of the gardens

was accordingly directed to propose the purchase of the field from the owner. But to this proposal she refused to accede, from an insurmountable objection to part with any portion of the inheritance of her ancestors. The Caliph's advisers, however, were not slow to inculcate the legal fiction of more modern times, that a king can do no wrong; and listening too easily to this flattering advice, the Caliph allowed the poor woman to be deprived of her patrimony, and the property to be appropriated for the purpose he intended. The desired pavilion was accordingly erected on the spot. The humble and dispossessed owner, thus cruelly oppressed, resorted to the Cadi Bekir, who was in high repute for wisdom and justice at Cordova. This eminently truthful man, being less of a courtier than the king's advisers, only a few days after the complaint was made presented himself before the monarch in his new-built pavilion, mounted upon an ass, and with an empty sack in his hand. The Caliph, much astonished, was not slow to ask the cause of the singular phenomenon; whereupon the cadi preferred three boons, which the king willingly granted. The

ermission to fill the sack with earth from the piece of

which the pavilion was built; the second, that the

uld aid him in filling the sack—a request which was

h with some labour, good-naturedly complied with;

the third, that the monarch would complete his condescension by aiding the cadi to fix the burden on his ass. With this also, the urbane monarch endeavoured to comply; but a sackful of earth was somewhat too ponderous for the physical energy of the caliphat, and the king, smiling, let go his hold, complaining of the enormous weight, and the inability of his strength for the effort required.

This was Bekir's desiderated opportunity, and he fully availed himself of it, as with noble gravity he addressed his royal master: "Prince of the believers, this sack which you find so weighty, is but a small portion of the land you have forcibly taken from one of your subjects. If this is so intolerable a burden, what will the field itself be found, when you have to appear, as you must do at last, in the presence of an infallible Judge, loaded with the whole weight of your trespass?"

There are few finer or more pointed rebukes in the whole history of human experience than this. It rivals Nathan's apostrophe to David: "Thou art the man;" and indeed, looks like a compound of that remarkable incident and the other striking Scripture story of the Portion of Naboth the Jezreelite.

It is due to this noble caliph, to say that he instantly sprang toward the faithful judge, embraced and thanked him for the fine

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Indeed, the iron-hearted, inquisitorial character of the Spaniard was, and perhaps fortunately for mankind, incapable of true proselytising; and it is more than doubtful whether the Saracen race of this period did not, after all, drink a purer draught of Christian precept, from the fragments of our sacred religion which their impostor-prophet has so artfully intermingled with his Alcoran, than these gloomy and papistical Christians have even yet been able to obtain under their professed avowal of our evangelical faith. There may, at all events, be two opinions fairly enough entertained, as to the actual gain which Christendom and modern civilization have made by the expulsion of so progressive a race as the Moors from Spain.

It may form an addition of some interest to the preceding note, to mention, on the authority of recent travellers, that, notwithstanding numerous interminglings of race, there are many families in Algeria who can still boast of the pure Moorish blood, and that it is not difficult to detect the Moorish type. Of this race, the men are mostly above the middle height; their walk is noble and grave; they have black hair; their skin is a little bronzed, but rather fair than brown; aquiline noses, full faces, a middle-sized mouth, and large but sleepy eyes. Their features are less marked; and some say less, others more, handsome than those of the Arabs

and Berbers; their body is fully rounded, and they have generally much *embonpoint*.

Note 5.

"LISTS."

The Moors practised many of the rites and ceremonies of chivalry; and challenges to the Lists, or the more friendly emulations of the tournament, were not confined to Christendom and Christian knights alone. This is historically illustrated in the conclusion of the celebrated Arabian manuscript, in which the three authors of it, Abdallid Musach, Selim Hazem Gazul, and Mahomet Abn Omar, describe the false accusation, massacre, and subsequent vindication of the Abencerrages. After mentioning the accusation made to the king, Abdali or Boabdil, by Zulim Zegris and Hazem Gomel, that the queen had dishonoured his bed with Eben Zurrah; and how Albin Hamet, the individual party accused, and eighty-five others of his tribe of Eben Zurrah, were subsequently beheaded in the Hall now distinguished by the name of that tribe, and entering from the Hall of Lions of the Alhambra; this document concludes by an allusion to the contest of chivalry which followed thereafter, and the Lists, in which the queen's honour was ultimately cleared: "And the queen trusted her defence to the

Christians; and noble and valiant Christians came forward to vindicate innocence before the king, and in the presence of all his people. They fought manfully against her accusers, and God put courage into their hearts, and strength into their arms, because they fought for the truth. They conquered each vile accuser against whom they contended; and the last of the vanquished Zegris, the provoker of this horrid plot, finding himself ready to yield up his wicked spirit, caused himself to be carried near the king and queen, and spake the truth, confessing that envy had poisoned his soul, and induced him to say the thing that was not. And as soon as he had made this confession of his wickedness, he died.

"And the Christian champions of the queen were in danger of being all taken and slain; but God delivered them," &c.

From other sources we learn, in reference to this interesting event, that the Zegris and Gomels, after making their accusation to the king, and inciting him to vow the destruction of the Abencerrages, were too prudent to allow his anger to break forth openly; but urged him rather to dissemble, and not alarm the jealousy and resistance of so powerful and popular a family. They accordingly advised him to entice them into a snare, before the doomed tribe could put themselves into a state of defence; and thus avenge with

more safety and impunity the insult offered to the crown. This artifice succeeded but too well; for the easily advised and deluded king repaired to the Alhambra, and having provided himself with thirty armed guards and the executioner, sent for the Abencerrages one by one, and on their entrance to the Hall of Lions, beheaded them beside a large vase of alabaster, which was quickly filled with the heads and blood of the victims. The progress of the barbarity was fortunately checked by the escape of a page who had accompanied his master, and in the hurry of the scene withdrew and alarmed the remainder of the tribe, by whom the city was immediately excited to tumult, with the cry of "Treason! treason! Let the king die! He unjustly puts to death the Abencerrages." The Alhambra was thereupon invaded at once; and, proceeding to the Hall of Lions, the insurgents found the king protected by the Zegris and Gomels, two hundred of whom they slew on the spot. The king, however, escaped, and, shutting himself up in the castle, refused to see the queen; while those who had accused her, still persisted in their accusation, and offered to maintain the charge, at arms, against all who should dare to contradict them. The injured princess was closely imprisoned, and the day for her execution fast approaching—when, singularly enough, neither the remainder of the Abencerrages, nor any of

the other Moors, offered to defend her. She was in this extremity advised to commit her cause to some Christian knights, and the result was as already narrated.

The intestine divisions of the Moors at this time, which these events greatly increased, led shortly after to the subjugation of Granada; and it is said, that the Abencerrages, stimulated by revenge, sullied their hitherto untarnished patriotism, by contributing to the downfall of their country—this last glorious seat of Moorish dominion in Spain.

Note 6.

"Ben Zurrah."

This powerful, celebrated, and chivalrous tribe was descended from Abenzaho, one of the bravest of the Moors who accompanied the distinguished Saracen conqueror, Moussar Ben Hassan, on his invasion of Spain. The name is written indifferently, Ben Zurrah, Eben Zurrah, Ben Cerrage, Abencerrage, and sometimes Abencerraxe and Beni Cerraj; and is said to signify the children of the palace or saddle. The Ben, Eben, or Aben, is a mere Moorish or Arabian prefix, as are also Al, El, Abel, &c.; and we have ied, modified, or dropped it *ad libitum* in our text.

NOTES TO CANTO III.

Note 1.

"VEGA'S LAUGHING BOWERS."

The famed Vega, or plain of Granada, forms a kind of basin about twenty leagues in length by eight in breadth, sheltered by the mountains of Elvira and Sierra Nevada on the one side, and on the other side by an amphitheatre of lesser mountains, all decorated with mulberry-trees, oranges, citrons, vines, and olives; and is watered by five small rivers, and an infinitude of springs, which serpentine along meadows of perpetual verdure, through groves of orange-trees, fields of wheat and flax, plantations of sugar-cane, and forests of the stately oak. All these productions, so varied, so delicious, and so valuable, required in this climate

but little culture or trouble to bring them to perfection. The soil, a stranger to the forbidding inactivity of winter, is in a state of constant vegetation, and the winds that descend regularly from the mountains, as if expressly to qualify the sultry heats of the summer, and preserve a pleasing temperature, while they assist respiration and preserve health, protect and revive the flowers with which nature in her bounty has bedizened this, her great masterpiece. Vegetation is everywhere so active, that buds, blossoms, and fruits are seen upon the same tree at one and the same time, as contending for pre-eminence in gratitude, and striving which should best beautify the spot that had produced them.—*Bourke's History.*

The word Vega, from the Arabic Bekáh, signifies a watered valley between hills.

Note 2.

"Dervise Gate."

Granada, we find from the Chevalier de Buorgoanne, had formerly twenty gates; the first, being that of Elvira, still remaining. The one here referred to was the fifth gate, called by the

Moors Bibataubin, or the Gate of the Hermits, and which led to different solitudes, the abodes of dervises.

We have been somewhat elaborate in these notes, the object being convenience to general readers. The tale was written by the author many years ago, and contributed by him to the last numbers of an expiring magazine, in which it appeared in a mutilated form, only to be still-born, or, rather, buried alive.

In our note upon the "Hand and Key," we made special reference to the saying, prevalent among the Moors, that the Christians would never enter that gate, the entrance to the Alhambra, till the hand took the key. The ethics of history, its most important, and perhaps, after all, its most interesting part, have yet to be written; but it may not be without its use to remark further, as a recognition of the "Hand" in the history of this period, that a nearly similar moral offence led to the introduction of the Moors into Spain, and, ultimately, to their expulsion

from that kingdom. The conduct of Roderick, the last king of the Goths, in violating the daughter of his relative, Count Julian, induced the latter in revenge to seek an interview with the Moorish general, Moussar, at the time that he had pushed his conquests in North-western Africa as far as the Atlantic—an interview which immediately resulted in the dispatch of the celebrated Moorish general, Tarik, into Spain; the taking of Gibraltar, on which that invader has to the present day left his name; the subsequent battle of Xeres, in which the last king of the Goths disappeared from the page of human history, with nothing certain but an impenetrable oblivion over his fate; the invasion of Moussar, and a host of others in succession; and the rapid subjugation of all Spain.

As Roderick was an able but a licentious king, who had the misfortune to involve his country, by his folly, in his fate; so the contrasted but almost strictly parallel history is that of Muley Hassem, the last really talented king of Granada. With Roderick equally able, with Roderick equally licentious, at the very summit of power and promise, it was the misfortune of this prince, thongh he commanded others, to be himself commanded by a favourite, on whom he doated to such an excess as to let his passion triumph over his prudence. At her instigation, he was induced

to repudiate his queen, Aïxa, a descendant of one of the first families in Granada. It was impossible for such an insult to be passed over lightly, or that her whole family should not be implicated in her resentments. The injured princess accordingly won over her son Boabdil (he whom we have already mentioned as the cause, or rather instrument, of the massacre of the Abencerrages) to espouse her quarrel, and erect the fatal standard of rebellion against his unfaithful father. A civil war was consequently kindled, which produced a third competitor for sovereignty in the person of Zagal, the brother of Muley Hassem, at that fatal moment when the implacable and remorseless enemy of their race, Ferdinand of Arragon, by an alliance with Isabella of Castile, had concentrated a power in his person with which Hassem, in the unity of his strength, had shewn fair promise of being able to cope, but for which intestine division wholly disjointed his force. His son Boabdil, by his unsuccessful attack on the city of Lucena, fell into the hands of this powerful enemy; and Ferdinand was not slow to use him as an instrument for the betrayal and destruction of his country. While the infatuated Mussulmen were still tearing each other to pieces in Granada, Boabdil was once more artfully let loose upon the scene, as the puppet-king and tributary of Ferdinand, and a pretext for his

sinister friendship and fatal intervention. The issue is soon told. Unhappy Granada became the shambles of national suicide at the instigation of Hassem, Zagal, and Boabdil, who each madly vied with the other in precipitating the ruin of their friends and country; so that the Saracen power fell a prey to itself, to become scarcely a conquest even for an enemy. At the height of the confusion, Muley Hassem, whose licentiousness had been the cause of these excesses, died—leaving, even with all his faults, no equal in capacity behind him. Zagal and Boabdil divided the kingdom; dissensions continued between them; Zagal sold his portion to Ferdinand; and Boabdil, at last confined to Granada, had to face at bay, in that last refuge of his people, the whole force of an augmented enemy. Is it wonderful that, as a climax to these rapid steps of hurrying and dark disaster, Granada, the noblest work of military skill in Spain, the city of a thousand towers, should fall without a blow? One other suicidal act—a capitulation—and dominion passed for ever from the Moors in Spain—the Aladdin-like dreamland of their glory was over. Thus perished in succession the empire of the Goth and of the Moor; and thus, with *single-handed justice* to them both—according to no fabled foolery or idle tale—that mysterious HAND *took* THE KEY.

We are strangely haunted, for, after all, fancy *will* run in the lines of reason, and gather up the analogies of imagery—we are strangely haunted, at the conclusion of this subject, with Young's grand impersonation—FATE :

> The Goddess with determined aspect turns
> Her adamantine KEY'S enormous size,
> Through destiny's inexorable wards ;
> Deep driving all her bolts on both their fates.
> Then, from the crystal battlements of heaven,
> She hurls it downward through the dark profound,
> Ten thousand, thousand fathoms, there to rust,
> And ne'er unlock her resolution more.

Having thus disposed of the Key, may we not equally inquire of the Hand if this were not the same that scared Belshazzar at his feast, and whether its first faint imaging, which was yet powerful enough to express the *mene, tekel,* of the Goth, behind the silken flutterings of those Andalusian banners which history has referred to, was not but a presage of its adamantine hold upon the Gate of Judgment, its first and final seat; and if, after all, the greater King in Judgment there, were not the spirituality mystically involved in that silent sculpture ?

It may be following it too nicely, all this, for the rigorous rivets of demonstrative induction; but the current of human ideas is something, and the metaphysical is, though unsuspected, really the largest part of our lifetime here; for the sum of every man's imaginings vastly exceeds the *quantum* of his actual experience, as if, even in this world, our spirit-life were greater than the shadow that passeth away; and the results thrown off by us under mental hypothesis cannot be without their moral value and obligation, if God is to bring every thought into judgment; but seem to indicate rather, that the soul is continually in contact with the unseen but everlasting ethics of truth.

Be this as it may, these Moorish emblems are invested with the mysterious accident of a strange significance.

ROSE:

A MODERN ROMAUNT.

CANTO I.

ROSE.

CANTO I.

(SCENE.—INDIA IN 1857.)

REBELLION reigns!—a patriot few
Are battling with the fierce Gentoo;[1]
And o'er a land, with all the charms
That e'er spontaneous nature gave,
Scared woman's shriek, and shouts, "To arms!"
Of those who only know to dare,
Are mingled, in tumultuous cry,
With rage—crime—horror—misery!—

The war-blast of the anger'd brave—
The scream of fury or despair,
With lightning's brief intensity,
Flash through the darkening agony;
For every passion here is strung
To full remorseless energy,
And every pang from suffering wrung,
Which makes the outraged glad to die.
And here are deeds of dire revenge,
Which man from man to demon change:
Degrading into deadliest ill—
Till every mercy shrinks apart,
To see how much of *future* hell
Is *present* in the human heart:—
The infant ripped—the wife profaned—
Love's hearth-fire quenched—its roof-tree flamed—
The gray-haired clotted with their gore—
The sick down-trodden on the floor—
Where trusting virtue loved to lie,
Now shame, and pain, and misery:

While vulture's scream and tiger's cry
Outshriek expiring agony,
O'er limbs and trunks, with powerless hate,
In death's pale horrors mutilate.

But—tracking hard the murderer's heel,
Time's deadliest vengeance—British steel!—
Known best when the indignant soul,
At crimes which Crime itself abhors,
Is fired beyond the heart's control,
And, with ennobling fury full,
Onward, like rushing whirlwind, pours,
To where—its hunted foe in sight—
It bursts immortal on the fight,
A lion famishing for prey!—
And—as it cleaves and treads him down—
Grieves savage Guilt expires so soon;
Nor scarce its maddened rage can stay
From scattering into shreds his clay!

* * * *

CANTO II.

CANTO II.

* * *

I WOULD not have thee drop a tear,
Although a world's whole grief were mine;
I would not have that smile so dear,
Like morning's transient glory shine;
But, brightening on in loveliest day,
Still keep serene its heavenly ray,
And like the regal sun go down,
Defying darkening nature's frown;
Leaving the swarthy brow of night
Resplendent with more gorgeous light;

And gliding on beyond the view,
O'er smiling realms and regions new,
To stream through these, with deathless worth,
Rich summers on the glorying earth:—
So would I have thee be to me
The heart's great light of sympathy,
To wake its tenderness to birth,
And make it all in flowers look forth,
Dewed with that purity of bliss
Whose very tears are happiness!

* * * *

CANTO III.

CANTO III.

* * * *

And thou art sleeping, Rose! from joy too full,
Or grief too long endured—how calm—how deep!
Thy charms beneath the wandering zephyr cool—
Thou liest like a summer in thy sleep!
What cause hath made thee both to joy and weep?
For both are on thy face—one silver tear
Gems the long eyelash resting on thy cheek,
And one smile on thy lip lies dreaming near.

In all thy beauty thou wert ever meek,
And meeker, purer still, thou liest now,
With all thy golden tresses by thy neck,
And all thy virgin snow upon thy brow:
Oh!—would thine eye proclaim its opening day—
How would my heart thrill 'neath the living ray!

Oh Rose, when wilt thou wake?—so fair!—so pale!
Dawn hath dispelled "the morning's mantle gray"—
The huntsman winds his horn in yonder vale—
And the lark trills from heaven its noontide lay:
Still thou art sleeping!—thou art sleeping long—
Unstirred by horn—uncheered by summer's song.

Oh Rose! when wilt thou wake?—so pale!—so fair!
Sunset hath ranged his glory in the west!—
The loving evening stirs thy golden hair—
One golden sunbeam smiles upon thy breast!

When wilt thou wake—our waiting eyes to bless—
From that long dream of heart-full happiness?

Day hath gone down! and star-eyed night come
forth!—
Yet star-eyed Rose, in moon-cold beauty, sleeps!
The dews are weeping o'er the flowery earth—
And thy sealed lid its silvery tear, too, keeps!

Oh Rose, so fair!—so pale!—why dost thou
weep?
Perchance this cold, hard world requires thy tear
For the poor transient joy it cannot keep,—
But a full rapture in thy heart lies deep,
And gives that smile unto a happier sphere.—
Oh loved and loving one!—thy heart's deep spell,
Canst thou not break, to say one fond farewell?

Alas—alas!—no morn shall brighten here—
No dawning sun exhale that diamond tear,
Till the long charnel trance of time shall break—

Then thou wilt wake !
Meantime—beloved one ! God keep thy breast !—
'Tis but a brief good-night ere I, too, share thy
rest,—
For thou art sleeping still !

[For reasons, inferrible from the explanation following the special title-page, only a few fragments of this poem are given. Nor is it probable the whole of it will ever appear, unless the public, as well as the author, can obtain a fairer principle of dealing than that embraced in the present arrangements of so-called high-class publishers. The remedy lies not in his power : the public and new publishing enterprise alone can break the obvious evil down. But next to that it is the duty of authorship to give it passive but inflexible resistance.]

NOTES

TO

ROSE.

NOTES TO ROSE.

Note 1.

"FIERCE GENTOO."

ON the subject of the Indian Mutiny, the present Author, in October 1857, wrote the following as an explanation and exposure of its causes and character. The still unremedied error of our Indian policy there pointed out, with the continuing and unparalleled horrors of its consequences to the Hindoo, and, in all probability yet again to ourselves, must be the apology for here reproducing it :

"*Hindoos or Gentoos—one of the most ancient nations, distinguished for their humanity, gentleness, and industry, and polished by letters and the arts, &c.*"—*Opinion in* 1841.

Will it be believed that the contrast presented by the Hindoos of 1857, to the eulogised specimen of humanity above described,

is a change of character, produced by sixteen years' unobserved progress in depravity, which has rendered the gentle Gentoo of yore a very fiend in ferocity now? Or can it be satisfactorily explained that these barbarous "Huns," who have started up everywhere like demon spirits amid the plains of oriental industry and peace, are beings who, successfully invocating hell's murdering ministers, have become suddenly filled from the crown to the toe top full of direst cruelty, so that they are capable of outbutchering the immortal infamy of Nero, and devastating the world with slaughter, under the damning impulses of one depraving hour?

With neither explanation will philosophy be satisfied, for neither coincides with the experience of mankind. Misdescription has misled us as to the true character of the Hindoo throughout.

We saw the injustice of the Brahminical system doom the patient and meek-spirited Paria to everlasting uncleanness—a lazar, a leper, and an outcast. We saw its pride consecrate its priesthood to high-caste privileges, without reference to the equalities of human right, and at the same time ferociously devote them to self-torture and mutilation. We saw its cadaverous suttee-fires, night and day, insult the sanctity of heaven with the lurid murder of widowhood, 'mid the demoniac applause of fanatic furies dancing round the

horror. We beheld the ghastly skeletons of the Juggernaut whiten the fairest plains of our dominion in this very Bengal (now so terribly visited), with the annual sacrifice of *ten hundred thousand* enthusiasts out of that insane crowd of superstition which twice a year wandered without light to this barbarity's ghastly shrine. We saw around it the carcasses of humanity lie festering for miles, and the vulture and the wild-dog gorge on for ever in that open grave, without diminishing the unshrouded carrion of our kindred dead. We saw Ezekiel's dread valley-vision of dry-bones renounce the unsubstantial regions of fancy, and gather out of the ranks of the living in grim reality before us. All these we saw for more than half a century, during which the locality of the Juggernaut has been an appanage of British dominion—nay, not only saw, *but tolled and made a profit on* the benighted victims to that dread gathering of unburied dead. We saw a larger number of beings than all the armies of Europe, every year fall victims to a system which, in its single self, centres a larger amount of suffering, havoc, and wholesale murder to mankind than all the atrocities gathered from the four corners of the earth otherwise, and combined in one horrid heap of cruelty and crime, can elsewhere furnish forth. And what did we—a Christian nation, responsible to God and humanity for all the duties of good govern-

ment, and all those institutions calculated to preserve the life and protect the person and property of our subjects?—what did we for these victims of darkness and direst delusion? Why, delegated a responsibility, of which no government can free itself before Heaven, and handed them over to a company of traders to be made merchandise of—not, indeed, in the sense of the slave-trade, but in a sense vastly *worse* in itself, and in the amount of actual suffering involved to humanity, than that kindred but *lesser* horror of the West, which it is our national boast that we have extinguished for ever? Yes, be it known to you, unsuspecting Christian reader—since 1803, when Britain possessed itself of the province of Orissa, in which lies that shore of sandy and desert waste where fitly sits this gaunt idolatry of death, the Juggernaut —*fifty millions* of our fellow-beings, God's immortal creatures, have strewed the pilgrimage-pathways with their carcasses, under the encouragement, and to the *profit* of Christian British rule. Think of it, in all the realising immensity of comparisons which you *can* make: more than all that European war has devoted to slaughter for the last five hundred years, have gone down in that brief half-century, martyrs to this horrific Vishnu. A number of devotees equal to the entire number of slaves in America—equal to the entir epopulation of Scotland—perishes

self-sacrificed to this enormous monstrosity of the East, *every three years.*

Tending directly and only to degrade, and inevitably to brutalise the whole heart and nature of the Hindoo, this dreadful waste of human life still, year by year, has putrefied, unsepulchred, before the face of Heaven; and it is not till the grim spirit of fanaticism, which has acted high-priest to that ghastly spectacle for unheeding ages, turns round to immolate a new sacrifice from the ranks of European adventure, that Britain—for the first time opening her eyes to the reality of the Hindoo's cruel character—stands fully horrified and appalled.

Shall we ever hear more of the *humane* and *gentle* Hindoo now?—Why not? Would he not, brother Briton, be still gentle as ever if he spared your women, even though he continued to burn his own alive? Would he not be still humane if he only spared your manhood, and infancy, and age; while under the institutes of Menou he daily continued to torture his own body and soul, till he acquired, as enjoined, a heart of adamant—"*callous to all sorrow,*" and "*blind to all fear!*" In the eyes of your curiosity-hunters, he would be still all that they have hitherto said, "one of the most ancient of nations, distinguished for their humanity, gentleness, industry, and polished by letters and the arts."

Let no misdescription for a moment longer hide this horrid fallacy from your view. You have done your duty by the slave, but the Hindoo is also your fellow-immortal, and what have you done for him?—him whom God, by His providence, has placed in your hands, that he might be influenced and protected by your power, and made partaker of your civilisation and its social advantages. It was bad enough when he himself believed in his error; but when a Christian government comes in, and encourages and makes a commercial profit on his delusion, what light in all the world remains for his moral darkness, what guiding-star of sympathy shall lead him aright?

In the terrible urgency of such a case, what should Britain have done?—What should Britain do? We dare say our government would wonder to hear it said, that, though its preaching and professing people, as a nation, may stand a chance of being considered good Levites, the antique Roman, who worshipped Jupiter and Mars, was a better Samaritan. Yet what can we say before that Roman law, which declared that the man who saw another's life in jeopardy, without doing all he could to save it, should be tried and punished as an accessory to his death? If Britain, in giving religious liberty of conscience to the Hindoo, mean liberty of conscience to include a right to commit

wholesale murder and suicide—the right of a million of human beings annually to destroy their own lives—we can only say that the liberty of conscience so accorded may be called liberality, but to our mind it is a liberality more horrible a hundredfold than all the persecutions and martyrdoms that bigotry and intolerance ever perpetrated in Europe. Britain, so soon as it regains its ascendency in the East, must, in the name of humanity, proscribe the Juggernaut; and every Hindoo institution implying inequality of civil right between the meanest Paria and the proudest Brahmin. It must institute and enforce equalising and equitable laws. These it must do, otherwise the present restoration of its ascendency will be merely a temporising with the evil in hand. It will be the duty of Britons at home to agitate for this by all those means which were so successfully adopted for the abolition of the slave-trade. For these purposes, societies ought to be immediately instituted throughout the country—now when the heart of the nation is bleeding, when the feeling is fresh. This should be our national fast—our public act of practical repentance. We would be the last to judge any nation, or cast God's visitations in the face of affliction as matters of accusation and reproach against the sins of the sorrowing; but any one who looks on the present condition of our people in the East, must see that the

horrors and brutalities to which they are subjected, are as directly traceable to the brutalising influence of Brahminical institutions which we have unjustifiably spared, as any the most obvious effect can be traceable to its cause. [Even the man who does not believe in any God cannot fail to see this.] Britain's course, then, must be one of energetic and instant action. Unless we proceed at once, let it be remembered that for every six years of delay, twice the population of all Scotland is destined to perish in India as sacrifices to Vishnu! Stereotype the fact in your memories in all its most painfully momentous interest—for every six months of delay five hundred thousand Hindoos will perish. Let, then, the restoration of our Indian dominion be marked by one great public act of retribution, the most terrible to them, the least unbecoming to us—an act of vengeance, after punishing all the ringleaders who fall into our hands, which neither arrogates the peculiar attributes of Him to whom vengeance belongs, nor inflicts a stain upon our character as a Christian people. Let us charge their idolatry with the crimes they have committed, and solemnly, as a criminal execution and penalty, destroy the Juggernaut, and proscribe the pilgrimage and the inequality of castes for ever. The vengeance, though one supremely ridiculous to us, will be the most overwhelmingly horrible to them; more so,

obviously, than massacring a million of themselves, and that is the important object to be attained. It will be one which will impress the whole minds and hearts of the Hindoos so long as Brahminism has an institution or an influence among them. Do we fear to venture upon this? After subjugating a people, will we tremble before a phantom? Will every duty, every obligation of religion and humanity, call us to their aid in vain? We recently abolished the suttee, and our success in that will stand up against us as the practical condemnation of all delay with the Juggernaut.

It is not by overlooking these facts that we are likely to view the Eastern question aright, or find a remedy for its existing evils. We ourselves, by a system altogether unnecessary, organised, and trained, and armed—yea, more, licensed—all the hatred of the present insurrection. But the remedy is still in our hands, so far as the future is concerned. It was only of late the mother-country thought of giving our other colonies a legislation for themselves; and she did so then, less from a regard for the necessities of these young states, than because she felt that her offspring had grown up and become too cumbersome to be continually carried in the arms, and fed at the breast. But from the first moment of our possessing India, the necessity for a complete system of legislation

existed there—a system identifying the entire government with the conquerors, as a substitute for the native authority, which had necessarily been taken away. Instead of attending to this want—instead of proclaiming in the impartial eye of public justice, an equality of right and protection to all—British dominion left the Hindoo, in violation of the very first elements of equitable and benign administration, the Juggernaut, the suttee, the oppressively unequalising operation of the *castes*, and all the savagery and injustice of Brahminical institutions and rites—left them, in short, a system of barbarity in that root of men's whole sentiments and emotions, *their religion*, to habitually deprave and brutalise them. *By so doing, British maladministration becomes directly chargeable with all the ferocities of the present insurrection;* for, if we left them such murder-craving and blood-drinking atrocities as their own religious institutions, we had no right to expect that, in any eventuality in which our interests might be at issue, a system which furnished only thorns to the Hindoo himself, would produce grapes and vine-leaves to us. True, we could not consistently force Christianity upon them, for our intelligence recognises the fact that man has no divine authority to *force* religion anywhere. But we could, at least, have put down such hideous monstrosities as theirs in the bare

name of humanity alone. The pretext for sparing this Juggernaut Ghoul in its surrounding Golgotha—leprously putrescent as it is with all the most loathsome brutalities of reprobate lechery and carnivorous ogreism, we have not even heard. Surely it could not be that Christian conquerors, after overrunning all India, and annihilating every opposition, fell down before the Molochs of a vanquished people, and trembled at the superstitious influence of an idolatry's imaginary power? If it were—well may the Mahommedan Hindoo deride us for giving place to such filthy hell-gods as these. He at least knows that the Mussulman invaders of Hindostan did not so scruple in their age of conquest; but forced down the throats of the resisting Gentoos, the tenets of their Mecca impostor, as conqueror after conqueror, in the fervour of fanatic Islamism, overran their land. We have not yet, with all our modern advantages, become such vigorous legislators in India as Gengis and Timour Khan. The people of India may have been subjugated, but the idols of the empire are unconquered still.

If Britain seeks the restoration of her ascendency in India to maintain the mere attitude of a conqueror, she is shedding heroic blood for the objects of baseness, and possessing herself with a priceless gem with no higher than a robber's motive—to squander in vice

what she is grasping by crime. Our patriotism is well, our heroism noble, and glory may justly honour and vaunt of their deeds; but humanity is better than all, though she wakes no high rapture of praise, and her paths are apart from fame. Britain's duty but begins with her success. Her responsibilities lay tribute on her laurels, and demand of her all the deeds that make honour of power. The duties of a government have two severe criteria—the necessities of the ruled is one, the opportunities of the ruler the other. And as Britain stands at the very highest point among nations, in the one respect, while her Hindoo subjects lie at the very lowest extreme in the other, we must see at once the wide outline we are called to fill in. Our responsibilities involve all the duties of civilisation; and if our country would not make a mere barbarous inroad of her conquest—if she would not degrade her heroes to felons, she must anxiously employ the opportunities their prowess has won for the noblest of human aims. If we tame not the tiger we have caged, what right have we to murmur if it tear us when we recklessly sport with its fangs? A spectator would but laugh at our folly. Have we, then, ever laid upon the Hindoo the responsibilities of that higher morality we execrate him for not shewing amid the savagery of war? Is it not everywhere declared by those on the spot, who ought to know best, that our Indian

government has done all it could to discourage the Gospel—has played the coward and the apostate with our own creed, and dared to blush for the Christian's God and Saviour in the presence of benighted idolators? Well might many of them be ashamed to call themselves Christians—even the heathen would have sneered at them had they pretended to the name. In many instances they not only misled the poor natives by their apostacy, but corrupted them by their lives. But we forbear to enter into particulars, the filthy details of which, as exposing the privacy of hoary sinners, could only create disgust. We deal with facts of wider scope than the obscenities of mere infamous biographies. Let us ask, is it for the paltry revenue of about £12,000 per annum, derived by the East India House from the exhibition of the Juggernaut vision of Vishnu, that they have continued that atheistical spectacle for more than fifty years, at an annual waste of more than a million of human lives? Was this the paltry consideration for which they preferred to be doorkeepers in the house of Moloch, rather than dwell in their Christian integrity. Was this the motive for suppressing the advocacy of Christianity in the Indian press, or for discouraging the propagation of the Gospel among the Hindoos? We find it matter of history, that the British took possession of Orissa in 1803, and forbore to exact the contributions of the

pilgrims during Marquis Wellesley's administration; but that, on his departure from India, the Bengal government passed an order for the management of the pagoda of the Juggernaut and the taxing of the pilgrims. The contributions of these wretched beings (who, in yearly pilgrimages, reach the number of one million two hundred thousand, nine-tenths, at least, of whom, it has been calculated, die on the road, from famine, hardship, and sickness) amounts to about £12,000 annually—*a sum which falls to the Bengal government, after deducting the expenses of the temple!!* Can any exaggeration of language add a single feature of further horror to these bare facts? British Christians—a company of merchants in London, have farmed the revenues of the wealthiest province in the British Empire for the last century and a half, collecting and extorting their revenues as revenue-farmers best know how; and during the last fifty years they have disgraced and outraged the name and the honour of this country by participating in the *practice* and *profits* of a *murderously criminal* heathenism —have maintained and regulated a pagan temple for the exhibition called Juggernaut or Juganath, *the Lord of the world!*—have calmly beheld fifty millions of their fellow-beings perish, to all appearance, soul and body, before this mercantile and mercenary delusion—and have netted about £600,000 as a salvo against com-

punctious visitings on the subject. Six hundred thousand pounds for fifty millions of human lives—less than twelve farthings for an immortal being, body and soul! Surely in the rear of all the Sodoms that awake in ghastliness to judgment, the black Iscariot himself will rise against this generation, and condemn it for trafficking so foul; for if it escape, even he may accuse Heaven that the price of the potter's field had a temptation to human frailty compared with this.

Some of us who live at home, afar from such depravities, have considered we had intimations of Divine anger—that unclean consciences were among us, and have humbly, under national fasting, asked, Lord, is it I? You went to church, fellow-Christians, in voluntary humiliation ten days ago, scarce knowing which of your sins to think of for the occasion, and deeming, doubtless, that the ways of the Creator were involved in a darkness impenetrable to human thought. But look at the question now. Was ever Christian philosophy entitled to point more unerringly to the ways of Providence, than we do here to a moral cause more than commensurate in its magnitude with all the calamity we have endured? We have deeply and nationally sinned where we least thought of, or knew it; yet Heaven has not visited us without mercy, as the rapidly progressing restoration of our eastern dominion is even

already beginning to shew. But do not forget that the government of Bengal has perpetrated a crime in the name of British rule—vaster far in its magnitude than the worst infamy with which history, ancient or modern, can reproach any nation but our own. It remains, then, for you to say that this gigantic atrocity shall continue, now that you know it to be perpetrated under British sanction; or whether, from this time forward, it shall cease to be? Whether you will continue to hold up the heathen's own dark creed to his benighted eyes, while still howling out vengeance against crimes which he cannot fail to commit, under the brutalising influences you are maintaining, in all their depraving integrity, around him?—or whether you will teach the path of rectitude, before exacting its results, and plant the good seed, that its fruit and blossom may appear?

The field is ripe for the reaper everywhere, but British misgovernment has utterly paralysed the power of the Gospel in India. But for this, the Hindoo might have been ruled at one tithe the cost our Presidencies have maintained, and been Christianised long ago. In the East, not Empire but the Gospel is Peace. This, and civil institutions, must supersede military rule. Where the principles of peace are once taught, the expensive elements of war will cease to be required. Elevate the people by all the influences

of civilisation, and they will require no longer to be domineered over by the sword. They will know their own interest too well to seek revolution.

Hitherto Britain has given the Hindoos nothing but a change of masters, and handed them over to a set of tax-farmers, as if they were unworthy of a thought. There is not a single beneficial institution in Hindostan, established as a public and universal element for the Hindoo's improvement, which the British government has had the slightest hand in advancing. To comparatively private and almost individual enterprise, must be attributed all that has been done for good; and what could that do, however zealous, for two hundred millions of a people? Give them national institutions, and duties in accordance with the interest and politics of their rulers, and lay the responsibilities of order and self-government in some degree upon them, with the subordinate management of their public affairs, always under British guidance and supervision, and the most advantageous results will be found to follow; the labours and expense of government will be greatly lightened, and a principle will be set in operation for the national improvement of the entire race. A people without public duties is a people without a social guide—a people whose responsibilities are withdrawn. Such a community must be con-

tinually drifting into error, for it wants alike compass, pilot, and chart. Had we established a system suitable for the interests of peace in India, we never would have required a hundredth of those sepoys who have strengthened their rebellion against us, by our own instructions under the false maintenance of a war-system, and sheathed our own weapons in the breasts of our citizens. Until a people are compelled to self-government, they never can be civilised; the very acts of self-control so imposed, are the most vital instructors in civilisation. Mankind will always cling to good institutions and rise by them. The Hindoos, however, were fitted for, and in the practical experience of, self-government ages before we knew them, and though the qualities of their system might be liable to exception, they were better and more civilising than none. They *were steps*, however erring, in the inevitable line of progress. The effect of our intervention has been to deprive them even of this, without the introduction of any substituted system, and we have thereby divested them of the responsibilities of public order, and thrown them back in the scale of political advancement for at least three thousand years. They have been deprived of everything like social institutions, with the exception of that barbarising and horrible one which we have exposed—the ferocity of a religion whose avowed object is to degrade—

whose practice is the most pitiless in humanity—whose fruits are such as we have lately reaped—that ghastly crop of livid mangled murders, in which, to the horrified gaze of British Christianity, this ogre-monstrosity has now held forth, from the black dungeon of moral midnight, in which we have encouraged it to endure, the dreadful spectacle of *our* outraged kindred grasped at last, in the same appalling fangs which have for ages been ever red and dripping with the blood of *its own* legionary victims of vampire ravening and remorseless slaughter.

[After the above had appeared in 1857, some little public agitation occurred upon the subject, dealing feebly and slenderly with the facts involved; and the culminating point of which, as a consequence, reached no higher than the withdrawal of the East India Company's charter, and the substitution of a more direct British legislation. The whole central horror which we have pointed out, however, still continues to endure. The Juggernaut and the Castes remain. A million fresh victims still continue year by year to add their putrefying carcasses to the dreadful system, and lie bleaching into skeletons on the Indian plains, without exciting us to pity, or provoking us to moral action; while the

central government of the British dominions, and all of us through it, have become only more directly chargeable with the gaunt atrocity in its horribly gigantic and unextenuated guilt. It is from these facts that the author draws his justification for the preceding reproduction, with but a faint hope, under all the circumstances of his present appearance before the public, that it may not be again in vain.]

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